

ALICE A. MACOMBER SCHOOL

Student & Family Handbook

2023-2024



Alice A. Macomber School

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Westport, MA 02790

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Fax 508-673-4284

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TRANSLATIONS

For a translation of this or any other school notice, please contact the Superintendent of Schools at 508-636-1140.

Portuguese

Contate por favor o superintendente das escolas pelo telefone (508) 636-1137 para qualquer tradução relacionada com esta ou outras notícias da escola.

Spanish

Contacta por favor al superintendente de escuelas en(508) 636 1137 para una traducción de este o de cualquier otro ávido de la escuela.

French

Veillez contacter le surveillant des écoles a (508) 636-1137 pour une traduction de ceci ou de n'importe quelle autre notification d'école.

German

Treten Sie bitte mit dem Betriebsleiter der Schulen bei (508) 636-1137 für eine Übersetzung von diesem oder von jedem möglichem anderen Schulbegriff in Verbindung.

NONDISCRIMINATION AGREEMENT

Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of the Westport Community Schools to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment, violence or discrimination based on actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex/gender, marital status, homelessness, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, family care leave status, pregnancy or any condition related to pregnancy, or military/veteran status.

Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Physical Challenge

The School Committee has designated the Student Services Supervisor as the responsible employee to coordinate school district compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and its administrative regulations. The Student Services Supervisor, as the district's Section 504 compliance officer, shall be responsible for continuing compliance with Section 504 and its administrative regulations. Any student has a ready means of resolving any claim of discrimination on the basis of physical challenge in the educational programs or activities of the district. In the event a student believes that there has been a violation of Section 504, s/he shall deliver to the Student Services Supervisor a written statement setting out the alleged violations, describing the incident or activity involved, the individuals involved and the dates, times and locations involved. The Student Services Supervisor shall provide the individual filing the written statement an opportunity to discuss the matter personally, if requested. The Student Services Supervisor shall make such investigation as is necessary to determine the complete facts involved. The Superintendent shall then take action as appropriate to bring the district in compliance with all federal and state regulations or refer the matter to the School Committee for action as appropriate. If the student submitting the written statement of an alleged violation is not satisfied with the handling of the matter by the district, s/he may present the matter directly to the School Committee by contacting the Committee Chairperson.

PRECEDENT AGREEMENT

In the event of conflict between the contents of this guidebook and those of the Student Policy Manual of the Westport Community Schools, the contents of the Student Policy Manual shall govern. The Policy Manual is available at the Principal's office during school hours. It is also available online.

Students and families are requested to read this booklet and the student policy manual carefully. Families should refer to this booklet throughout the school year.

Alice A. Macomber School

Dear Macomber Students and Families,

On behalf of the entire staff, it is my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you and your family. At the Alice A. Macomber School, we believe in fostering a love for learning right from the very beginning.

As your child takes their first steps into school, we want them to know that Macomber is more than just a place for academics; it's a second home. The physical and mental safety, growth, and happiness of our students are a top priority. We are proud to offer a safe and inclusive environment where your child can explore, discover, and interact with their peers to respect each other's differences and make new connections and friendships.

At Macomber, we offer a well-rounded education that not only focuses on academic growth but also nurtures creativity, critical thinking, and character development. Early childhood education is significant in creating and shaping a child's social interactions and learning potential. As we begin this new chapter together, we are committed to providing the best possible educational experiences to guide your child's learning and development. Students will participate in an array of activities to ignite their imagination and fuel their motivation. Early literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving will be achieved through hands-on activities, interactive learning, and discussions for your child to express curiosity, understanding, and enthusiasm. Our dedicated staff works together to fill each day with encouragement and inspiration that support the building blocks for a solid foundation.

At Macomber, we work along with families to instill essential values like kindness, empathy, and respect in our students. Together, we'll guide each child to become confident, hard-working, and compassionate individuals who make a positive difference in the world. We understand that your child's first years at school are important milestones for both you and your child, and we are here to make this transition as smooth and enjoyable as possible. We encourage open communication and welcome your involvement to guide and support your child's progress. We look forward to building a strong partnership with you and seeing those eager little faces ready to learn each day!

Once again, welcome to our school! Together, let's make this school year a joyful and memorable one for your child.

Sincerely,

Stacey A. Duquette
Alice A. Macomber School Principal

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Macomber School Motto

Alice A. Macomber School -- “Where small children take big steps in learning!”

Macomber School Mission

Alice A. Macomber School’s Mission is to provide a child centered learning environment and a developmentally appropriate school experience for the young learners in our care.

Macomber School Core Values

- All students have the capacity to learn.
- Everyone has high performance expectations.
- We have healthy self-esteem.
- We model collaboration and conflict resolution to solve problems.
- Learning is supported by a respectful, caring environment and compassion for others.
- We use best practices and most current research to make informed decisions.

Macomber Expectations for Student Learning

- All students should acquire, integrate and apply appropriately developmental levels of knowledge and skills with accommodations for the full range of abilities of young learners.
- Language acquisition and development are experience based.
- All students should integrate developmentally appropriate logical thinking skills to support problem solving.
- All students should have opportunities to acquire technological skills.
- All students will have access to developmentally appropriate curriculum and learning materials specifically geared to their age group to support achievement.
- All students should demonstrate personal and social responsibility.

Philosophy

It is our philosophy to provide a child-centered learning environment which is both age-appropriate and individually appropriate. In this setting, our aim is to nurture the children's development in the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive domains. The primary vehicles for children's learning, play, and language development are both child-initiated and adult supported through active interaction with adults and peers, as well as through exploration of materials.

In the integrated preschool setting, the environment is planned to address a wide range of developmental interests and abilities across a limited chronological age span. Accordingly, a variety of furnishings, equipment, and teaching strategies are explored to address the needs of children who show interest and skills outside the normal developmental range.

The philosophy at the kindergarten level is an expansion of the preschool philosophy. Classrooms are adaptable, flexible, livable, and welcoming. The children are provided an optimal environment for learning. An integrated approach to curriculum recognizes that content areas in instruction are naturally interrelated, as they are in real life experiences. In our resulting integrated curriculum, learning is regarded as a process rather than a collection of facts. The planning and implementation of the integrated curriculum are made possible through the flexible scheduling of instructional specialists, the consultative staff, and classroom teachers. The schedule takes into consideration the developmental needs of young children, allowing them time to explore, to converse, and to move about. Individual differences among staff, children, and their families are respected and celebrated equally as members of the school community.

The early childhood setting is not just a smaller version of elementary education. Children at the Macomber School are allowed to be successful with classroom experiences geared to their natural level of development. Macomber is a school that specifically accommodates the full range of abilities of young children. The use of developmentally appropriate curriculum and learning materials specifically geared to this age group allows for their greatest potential in a manner that is consistent with what we know about how young children learn and develop. This knowledge is consistent with the fundamentals of child development and emphasizes the belief that all children can learn.

Westport Community Schools School Committee Members

Thomas Aubin, Superintendent

Nancy Stanton-Cross | Chair

Melissa Pacheco | Vice Chair

Antonio Viveiros | Member

Gloria Cabral | Member

Evan Gendreau | Member

Lori Melo | Executive Secretary to the Superintendent & School Committee

Sharon Pinho | Recording Secretary

Central Office Administrative Team

Lisa Kaminski, Director of Curriculum

Kristin McDaniel, Human Resources Coordinator

Anthony Tomah, Director of Technology

Michelle Rapoza, Business Manager

Nancy Tavares, Special Education Coordinator PreK-5

Wendy Miranda, Special Education Coordinator 6-12

Melissa Sousa, Executive Business Services

Alice A. Macomber School 2023-2024

Principal Stacey Duquette

INTEGRATED PRE-K TEACHERS	TEACHER ASSISTANTS	OFFICE STAFF
Melissa Parker	Tricia Aguiar - Special Education	Judith Oliveira - Executive Secretary
Karen Sigman	Heather Branco - Pre-K	
Kelly Thiboutot	Lucy Cordeiro - Kindergarten	NURSE
	Kelly Dean - Kindergarten	Tracy Pereira - RN
KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS	Jeanine Deveau - Kindergarten	
Angelina Curtis	Christine Dias - Special Education	SCHOOL ADJ. COUNSELOR
Sienna Flynn	Kathryn Flanagan - Kindergarten	Elisabeth Harrington
Jennifer Medeiros	Rachel Fortier - Special Education	
Bonnie Santos	Jennifer Lavoie - Pre-K	SPECIAL EDUCATION
Michelle Thomas	Gorett McAvoy - Special Education	Nancy Tavares - Special Education Coordinator
	Paula Mello - Pre-K	Natalie Branco - Special Education Secretary
SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS	Tammy Pimental - Kindergarten	
Stacy Rivera - PK/K Sub Separate	Paula Raposa - Pre-K	FOOD SERVICES
Amy Sousa - Kindergarten Inclusion		Sherrie Giovannini - Manager
	ELL	Maria Fatima Silva
SPECIALIST TEACHERS	Ann Hathaway	
Allison Correia - Integrated Arts		CUSTODIANS
Gary Parziale - Physical Education	SERVICE PROVIDERS	Casey Jones - Day Shift
	Christine Morrisette - OT	Renato Araujo - Night Shift
DISTRICT BEHAVIOR	Jessica Randall - PT	
Sandi Mauk - BCBA	Karen Stiles - Vision	OUT OF SCHOOL TIME
Crystal Carreiro - Behavior Assistant	- Speech	Jennifer Chaves - Director
Korryn Pinard - Behavior Assistant	- Speech Asst.	

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

School Hours

Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten	8:50 am-2:20 pm
Kindergarten	8:30 am-3:00 pm

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures for Parent Pick-up and Drop-off

Kindergarten drop-off will be between 8:30-8:45 am and Kindergarten pick-up will begin at 3:00 at the Cafeteria door using the Osborn Street loop.

Families are to go through the Osborn Street loop and students will get out of the car on the passenger side and walk with a staff member to the door. Families must turn off the ignition during drop-off and pick-up. Kindergarten families may NOT park and walk their students to the door in the am or dismiss a student at that door in the pm.

Preschool/PreK students will be assigned a designated door to enter and exit the building daily. PK families will park and walk the students to their class' designated door each morning and then wait at that door in the afternoon for students to be dismissed.

*Staff are not able to be responsible to unbuckle or buckle students in and out of Car or Booster Seats.

**Arrival and dismissal procedures for all students may take additional time, especially at the beginning of the school year as we adjust to new routines.

TRANSPORTATION

School Bus Transportation

Parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from our Preschool & Pre-K programs each day. Parents are encouraged to set up car pools with each other.

Transportation will be provided to Macomber School from home to school and from school to home for students in kindergarten.

A parent or guardian must be at the bus stop for all kindergarten students. If no familiar adult is present, the student will be brought back to school or, if no one is available, to the Westport Police Station. The parent will have to make arrangements to have the student picked up. A parent may be charged a fee or lose bus privileges for 3 days after a child has been returned 3 or more times to school.

Video surveillance may occur on district school buses. Video recordings may become part of a student's educational record or a staff member's personnel record. The district shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention.

Policy for Emergency Transportation

Procedures suggested are based upon the *Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health* handbook policies. All parents are required to fill out emergency information forms at the start of the school year. This information contains names and numbers of person(s) to be notified in the event of an emergency, physicians' names and numbers, any pertinent medical information. Emergency transportation may be called. Parent/Guardian is always contacted (see Emergency Procedures Handbook).

School Bus Rules and Guidelines

These rules and guidelines are for the safety of students and bus drivers. Remember, school provided transportation is a privilege, not a right.

Practice Kindness:

Be respectful with words and actions.

Follow the bus driver's direction the first time.

Accepts Responsibility:

Ride only your assigned bus; get on and off at your assigned stop.

Keep personal devices off and put away.

Works Hard:

Maintain cleanliness and appearance of the bus. Do not damage the bus in any way.

Stays Safe:

Remain seated, facing forward in your seat.

No eating or drinking

Keep your body and all other objects to yourself and inside the bus.. Use appropriate noise levels

Consequences for bus infractions:

First offense: Warning

Second offense: Change of seat/preferential seating on the bus

Third offense: 1 day suspension from the bus

Fourth offense: 2 day suspension from the bus/ meeting with parents

Fifth offense: 3 day suspension from the bus/ meeting with parents

Any further offense will result in a prolonged suspension from the bus as determined by the offense well as a meeting with parents.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Absences

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. A child may be excused for legitimate reasons with approval of the school administrator on a case-by-case basis. A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of his/her character. Parents can help their children by developing good school attendance habits. Accordingly, parents will provide a written explanation for the absence and tardiness of a child. This will be required in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible. In instances of chronic or regular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences as justifiable.

Parents/guardians are asked to notify the school as early as possible if their son/daughter will not be attending school that day. Please call the school at (508) 678-8671 and leave a message with your child's full name. Please provide a note of excuse for your child's absence. Absences for independent family vacations taken during school time may not be approved by the school principal and will be considered as unexcused absences for the purpose of the state law. **Please note: A family vacation taken during school time will be considered an unexcused absence.**

Excused absences may include:

- an illness or injury that prevents the student from attending school. The illness or injury must be verified by a physician (parents/guardians have up to 5 days to send in a physician's note)
- a death in the immediate family (parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin) or other significant personal or family crisis
- suspension from school
- court appearances
- school sponsored field trips
- medical or psychological tests during the school day. The parent must show evidence (such as a note from the health center) that the tests could not be scheduled after school
- religious holidays

What Is an Unexcused Absence? Some parents think that any absence will be excused as long as the parent sends a note. *This is not true.* Here are a few examples of unexcused absences—even if the parent sends a note:

- repetitive and chronic absence due to illness or injury. In these cases, for the absence to be excused, the parent must submit a letter from a physician – within five (5) school days of the absence – verifying that the student was too sick or injured to go to school.
- family vacation
- extension of a religious or cultural holiday beyond the designated day or days on the school calendar

For additional information regarding WCS attendance policy, including that of “Excessive Absences” reference WCS Student Policy Handbook (pp. 43-46).

Homework Policy for Unexcused Absences

Student absences for family vacations scheduled at times other than the weeks or days identified in the school calendar are strongly discouraged. Due to the challenging content of the required curriculum, these absences create significant teaching and learning problems. Effective instruction in standards-based education requires discussion, group activities, and in-school practice. Many classroom activities are designed to address the readiness, interests, and learning styles of students through grouping and differentiation of instruction. These learning opportunities cannot be replicated for students who have been absent.

Parents/guardians who insist on taking students out of school for vacations at times other than those designated on school calendars should understand that teachers cannot provide school work in advance per school committee policy. Students returning to school after such an absence will be expected to participate fully in all class activities, including scheduled examinations. Upon request, graded assignments and/or tests will be provided to students when they return to school. Assignments and/or tests that are not completed within one calendar week of a student’s return, or learning expectations that have not been mastered, will adversely affect academic progress and report card performance levels.

Tardiness

Students in Kindergarten arriving at school after 8:50 am are considered tardy and must be signed in at the office before proceeding to class. Preschool students are considered tardy if they arrive at school after 9:00 am. Please remember that late students will interrupt instruction as they enter the classroom and likely will have missed important directions or an introduction to a concept or skill. Constant tardiness could have an adverse effect on your child's education.

Early Dismissal

Parents/guardians wishing to dismiss their child before the close of school must inform the office in writing the morning of the early dismissal. If your child is being picked up by someone other than his or her parent/guardian, authorization must be included in the note. When picking up your child from school, you will be required to come to the office to sign him/her out in our dismissal log. Any person attempting to dismiss a child who is unknown to the school office personnel will be asked to provide a valid photo proof of identification. The person should be on the emergency contact list. Otherwise, a parent will be called. Please be advised that early dismissals are very disruptive to the classroom and should be limited to emergency situations. Dismissals are also recorded on student report cards and attendance records.

School Cancellations and Delays

School cancellations and delays due to emergencies will be aired on the following television stations: WCVB (Channel 5), WLNE (Channel 6), WHDH (Channel 7), WJAR (Channel 10), WPRI (Channel 12), WFXT (Channel 25), WNAC (Channel 64), and the following radio stations: WSAR-AM 1480, WHJJ-AM 920, WPRO-AM 630, WBSM-AM 1420, WWBB-FM 101, WHJY-FM 94.1, WSNE-FM 93.3. **ONE CALL NOW**

will also notify you by phone or email regarding delays or cancellations. ***Please be sure the school has your correct phone number and email.***

In addition to our current “cancel” or “school on” options, we have instituted a third option when appropriate: A 90-minute delay. In the event of a 90-minute delay, simply move forward by 90 minutes the regular time when your child either meets the bus or when you deliver your child to school. ***Please be aware that school personnel will not be available on the regular school schedule, as they will also be operating on the same 90-minute delay. The Macomber School building will open at 10:00 a.m. and school will begin at 10:15 a.m.***

At rare times, unfolding weather conditions may warrant an early release from school. These early releases are **always** announced on local radio stations and may also appear on area television stations. Early dismissal announcements also appear on channel 16. Our **ONE CALL NOW** system will be activated to notify you of any changes in the schedule. Please be sure to sign up for **ONE CALL NOW** at www.westportschools.org by clicking on the **ONE CALL NOW** link.

DISCIPLINE

Throughout the years, a positive behavioral approach to student behavior has continued to be emphasized at the MAC. Positive behavioral supports and strategies focus on creating and sustaining school-wide, classroom and individual systems that improve the educational environment for all children. The Zones of Regulation is also used to help children identify their own feelings and set a plan to be able to learn and appropriately interact with others. Our aim is to explicitly teach behavioral expectations and then recognize the positive behaviors shown by our students.

By implementing these strategies, we can reduce school and classroom behavior disruptions and educate all students about acceptable school behaviors. The implementation plan includes clearly defined outcomes, research-validated practices, supportive administrative systems and information for problem solving behaviors. Expected behaviors for all areas of the school environment will focus on four areas: *Practice Kindness, Accept Responsibility, Work Hard, Stay Safe (PAWS)*.

As we are the youngest of the Westport Wildcats, we are “all paws in” to being our best selves when we:

Practice Kindness:

Be respectful with words and actions.

Share materials.

Help clean up classroom/cafeteria.

Be patient when waiting for your turn.

Accept Responsibility:

Complete work in a timely way.

Ask for help when needed.

Keep work area clean and organized.

Admit when you have made a mistake.

Use classroom/playground materials as intended.

Work Hard:

Continue to do your work even when it is hard.

Ask for help when needed.

Look over work to make sure it is correct.

Look for adult directions.

Stay Safe:

Use materials properly.

Keep hands and feet to yourself.

Know where the fire and safety exits are located.

Use appropriate noise levels

All staff members at Macomber School will establish regular, predictable, positive learning and teaching environments. The staff members will serve as positive role models to students as they teach expected school behaviors. As a school, we will continue to recognize expected behaviors in a variety of ways. By improving the school environment, we hope to increase learning time and promote academic and social success for every student.

With these general goals in mind, please review the guidelines with your child at home as they will be reinforced at school. We believe that fostering responsible

student behavior enhances the environment for learning. Our young children will require our encouragement and positive reinforcement in developing their life skills. Young children learn best in an environment in which there is an expected routine and familiar, reasonable guidelines. Their confidence will be best supported when home and school work together.

If the student is in a preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

For additional information regarding WCS discipline policy, including that of suspensions from school, reference WCS School Policy Handbook, Section (pp. 62-78)

Discipline Procedures

Macomber School will use consistent expectations for handling discipline. Teachers will address infractions in the classroom and seek Administrative support if needed. If a student receives an office referral, parents will be notified by administration. Parents must sign and return the *Office Referral Form*.

As a preschool and kindergarten school, it is imperative to ensure that any consequence is developmentally appropriate. As consequences, we typically use lunch reflection time, abbreviated time out of class to discuss the infraction (this could be with the assistance of the School Adjustment Counselor), parent contact/conference, or the loss of some/all of recess time. In more serious instances or if repeated behaviors occur, a student might be assigned an in-school suspension for part or all of the day, or an out of school suspension.

DRESS CODE POLICY

The responsibility for the dress and appearance of the students will rest with individual students and parents. They have the right to determine how the student will dress providing that attire is not destructive to school property, complies with requirements for health and safety, and does not interfere with the educational process. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements. This does not mean that student, faculty, School Council, or parent groups may not recommend appropriate dress for school or special occasions. It means that a student will not be prevented

from attending school or a school function, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as their dress and appearance meet the requirements set forth above.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Any student who intimidates or threatens another student through verbal, physical, mental, or written bullying will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including long-term suspension. The principal, dean, or his/her designee will implement this regulation in compliance with the district's Code of Discipline. For more information, visit our district website for our district plan (www.westportschools.org).

STUDENT CELL PHONE AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students' use of cell phones, and other electronic devices do not interfere with the educational program or school activities within the Westport Community Schools. The use and possession of cell phones and electronic devices at school or on school property is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, students who choose to bring cell phones and electronic devices to school or onto school property, including buses, agree to the following policy.

- Cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off and kept out of sight during class time and at other times as directed by school staff.
- For safety reasons, students may not use earbuds or headphones during school hours *unless* they have explicit permission from the principal. (This includes during recess, lunch or in hallways during passing time.)
- Any allowable use of cell phones and electronic devices must not violate existing school policies including but not limited to policies regarding:
 - bullying, intimidating, and harassing behaviors via texting and social networking sites;
 - academic integrity (e.g. sharing of assessment or assignment information);
 - safety protocols (e.g. fire drill procedures, hallway passing, etc);

- o acts that may interfere with the learning opportunities of other students or the orderly operation of the school; and use of a cell phone or electronic device with camera, video or voice recording function in a way or under circumstances which infringe the privacy rights of others.

- o Inappropriate content is unacceptable

Violations of this policy will be subject to progressive discipline in accordance with the respective school handbook. Multiple violations may result in the loss of the privilege to possess cell phones and electronic devices at school.

Cell Phone and Electronic Device Searches

The search of cell phones and other electronic devices for pictures, text messages, video, audio, or uploaded/downloaded material in connection with an investigation regarding an alleged violation of school inception and justified in its scope. Acceptable searches may include, but are not limited to, searches for video, audio, pictures, text messages, emails or other data regarding:

- assaults and/or fights;
- harassment/intimidation/bullying or sexting;
- possession, use, or distribution of controlled substances, illegal drugs, or alcohol;
- identification of ownership of stolen or lost devices; and,
- documentation of cheating.

If a search of an electronic device is found to contain evidence pertinent to an investigation, the school administration has the sole discretion to confiscate the device, contact the police, or give the device to law enforcement officials.

TOYS AND VALUABLES POLICY

Toys are not to be brought to school. Besides being distracting to classroom instruction, toys are often lost or misplaced at school. Toys include: electronic games, skateboards, yo-yos, trading cards or anything that disrupts the teaching/learning environment.

LOST AND FOUND

Please put your child's name on everything that he/she brings to school. This includes lunch boxes, hats, mittens, coats, boots, shoes, and school bags, etc. Parents are welcome to check for missing items in the *Lost and Found*, which is located in the main hallway in front of the office. Also, please encourage your child to check for lost items. Any student who loses an item on the school bus should contact the bus driver the next time the student rides the bus.

STUDENT CELEBRATIONS

It is the policy of the Macomber School to hand out invitations for special occasions only if all members of the classroom are receiving one.

SCHOOL SECURITY

For the security and safety of the children, our staff, and our school building, we would like to share the following policies and procedures:

All school entrances are locked during the school day. The building can be entered only through the door adjacent to the parking lot on the north side of the school. Please ring the doorbell and you will be greeted as promptly as possible. Please note the school doors do not open to students/families until 8:30 a.m. All visitors to the MAC will need to stop at the window located in the vestibule. Only visitors that are

there for volunteering or for meetings will have access to the school building. This includes any parents/guardians picking up students from the nurse's office.

Fire Drills/Evacuation Plans

A minimum of 4 fire/evacuation drills are held during the school year. Each classroom has a "fire drill and evacuation plan" posted in the classroom showing at least two exits. All staff are required to participate in training regarding the location and use of fire extinguishers.

More than one type of incident can cause a school building to be evacuated; fire, bomb threat, civil emergencies, natural disaster, and so on.

Special evacuation drill activities related to fire safety or other emergencies will be planned and implemented by each principal in coordination with the central office and/or civil authorities to ensure orderly movement of students to the safest available space in the event of a true emergency or disaster (WCS Ed. Policy Code: EBC).

In addition, Macomber School may also conduct drills based on other types of emergencies as directed.

For additional information regarding WCS School Security policy, reference WCS Student Policy Handbook (p. 88)

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

Breakfast

Macomber School offers a "Grab n' Go" breakfast for those interested. The "Grab n' Go" breakfast is available to all students. As students enter school each morning, those interested will be directed to the cafeteria to retrieve and eat their "Grab n' Go" breakfast before heading to their respective classrooms. Students will receive 2 whole grain rich items and one cup of 100% fruit juice. Students have the option to take a fruit over the fruit juice.

Lunch

The Macomber School serves wholesome and nutritionally sound meals daily to all students. Applications for free or reduced price lunches are available at any time during the school year should your financial status or household size change and should be completed even though we are participating in the free breakfast & lunch program. Our school has special menus designed for the nutritional needs and preferences of young children. Monthly menus are sent home and are posted in the school foyer as well as the school website for you to plan lunch choices with your child. The costs are as follows:

Lunch milk only .50

***All Macomber students will be receiving free lunch and breakfast again this year but must pay for milk if purchasing it separate from a full lunch.**

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Medication

All medications should be given at home when possible. PLEASE DO NOT SEND MEDICATION TO SCHOOL WITH A CHILD. A RESPONSIBLE ADULT NEEDS TO TRANSPORT ALL MEDICATIONS TO AND FROM SCHOOL. Any medication that a student will take in school (whether an over-the-counter or prescription medication) requires an order from a physician in order for the student to receive the medication at school. Medication brought into school MUST be in the original packaging with a pharmacy label. A parental consent form is also required. Both of these forms can be found at westportschools.org by choosing the Parent link on the top bar and scrolling down for the appropriate documents. The forms are

attachments at the bottom of the Health office webpage. You may also obtain copies of these forms from the school nurse.

Illness

Please do not send your child to school when signs of an illness such as a temperature of 100.4 or greater, persistent cough, vomiting or unknown rashes are present. If your child has a fever or is dismissed from school with a fever then they should return to school only after remaining fever free without the use of fever reducing medications such as Tylenol / Motrin for a FULL 24 hours. **Students that are dismissed with a fever must stay home the following day to allow for the 24 hour requirement.** Notify the school nurse if your child contracts any infection or contagious conditions such as: strep throat, conjunctivitis (pink eye), scarlet fever, chickenpox, mononucleosis, or whooping cough.

Injuries

Notify the school nurse if your child has a significant injury that requires a consultation with an orthopedic physician. If your child is under an orthopedic doctor's care, clearance will be needed to return to physical education activity. When you visit the orthopedic physician he / she can provide you with the necessary paperwork to forward to the school. If your student has a head injury or is diagnosed with a concussion, please call to discuss this with the school nurse. Remember that if a student is unable to participate in physical education then they will also need to stay inside during the outdoor recess period and refrain from physical activity during the recess period.

Physical Examination Requirements

A physical examination is required for **all** students entering **Preschool**, entering **Kindergarten** or **upon transferring into Westport Community Schools**. We also require a physical exam in Grades 3, 6 and 9. If a physical is required for your child this school year, please send in a copy of their physical exam. Notices will be sent home if a copy of your child's physical exam has not been received. The school physician is available late winter / early spring and will perform a physical exam if you wish.

Health Screening

Vision Screenings are done in Preschool, Kindergarten, Grades 1-5, Grade 7 and Grade 10. Hearing Screenings are done in Preschool, Kindergarten, Grades 1-3, Grade 7 and Grade 10. Postural Screenings are done in Grades 5-9. Parents will be

notified of any concern with a screening that necessitates a medical follow-up with your own physician or optometrist. A response letter with testing results should be forwarded to the Health Office. Height, Weights and BMI are done in Grades 1, 4, 7 and 10 to monitor growth and development. Please notify the school nurse in writing by the end of September if you do **NOT** wish for your child to participate in the BMI screening. A request to not participate must be received each year that you opt out of the screening. If you would like a copy of your child's BMI results please let the nurse know and a copy will be forwarded to you.

Miscellaneous

- Please do not send cough drops into school with your child. Cough drops may contain medication (which requires a doctor's order) or pose a choking hazard. Instead of cough drops, we recommend sending in a water bottle so your child can take frequent sips of water to soothe a sore throat or dry cough.
- Proper footwear is necessary to help prevent injuries during outdoor recess. Students who wear flip-flops or shoes without backs will **NOT** be permitted to use the playground equipment or athletic fields / courts.
- Students should come to school dressed for the weather as students go out for recess or for physical education. Because outside recess is so important for the development of young students, we have outdoor recess as often as possible. Students go outside for learning and recess as long as the temperature is 25 degrees or above.

For additional information regarding WCS Health and Wellness policy, reference WCS Student Policy Handbook (pp. 38-42).

STUDENT RECORDS

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school system to maintain information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student's parents or legal guardian and/or the student in accordance with the law and yet be guarded as confidential information.

The Superintendent will provide for the proper administration of student records in keeping with state and federal requirements. The temporary record of each student will be destroyed five years after the student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from the school district. Former students desiring information from their records may obtain it by requesting such information from the Director of Pupil Personnel

Services. The Committee wishes to make clear that all individual student records of the school system are confidential including individual addresses and telephone numbers.

For additional information regarding WCS Student Records policy, reference WCS Student Policy Handbook (pp. 28-37).

Change of Information

If at any time during the school year there is a change of address, telephone number, place of employment, etc., **you must notify the school** so that our records can be kept up-to-date.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Our class placement procedure is extremely child-centered and begins with extensive conversations about each individual child. Our goal is to create classes which address both the fit between the individual student and teacher AND to create a classroom environment which is conducive to learning for all students. Our teachers spend many hours and put much professional thought and effort into placing their present students into next year's classes. Teachers identify if a student is academically strong, average or challenged by the grade level material. Teachers also identify students who may need special assistance, whether it is remediation or extension of the grade level curriculum. In addition to academic performance, teachers also make note of student behavioral skills, identifying those who are

strong leaders with their peers, in need of peer support, or challenged by group interactions. Teachers also consider those children who need to be separated.

We respect tremendously that you know your child in ways we could not possibly know them. We likewise ask that you trust that your child's teacher also has knowledge about your child's academic, social, emotional and behavior needs that may vary significantly from what you see in the home setting. ***Here at Macomber, we ask that parents do not request a specific teacher. You may, however, share additional information to further assist us in this placement process. Parents may submit this information by letter only, addressed to the principal, no later than May 1st.*** Examples of the kind of information that can help in configuring classes include: changing family dynamics which could impact the classroom, newly diagnosed or potential learning difficulties, specific learning styles, peer relationships in or out of school, and any other factors which we might be unaware of that relate to your child's learning. **Please note that we do not accept letters that specify individual teachers by gender, experience level or name.** Thank you for your trust and support!

RETENTION AND PROMOTION

Research, common sense, and our own life experience shows us that social promotion (assignment) and retention are not effective solutions to the problem of underachieving or underperforming students. While social promotion does provide the advantage of socializing with peers of the same chronological age, social promotion sidesteps the achievement problem because students enter the next grade unprepared and the gap between expectations and performance widens each year. Only infrequently, where a child's social/emotional maturity or developmental readiness is an issue, will retention bring about expected results. The problem of underachieving students should be viewed in context, and individual plans should be developed to match individual solutions to individual achievement problems. A student's failure in school must be reviewed in multiple contexts. The family, the

health care provider, the school, the classroom, and the peer group impact on a student's ability to cope with the academic program.

Finding the answer to underperformance means viewing the student in these many contexts. Students must be prepared to meet the challenges of each grade level and are expected to demonstrate mastery of skills and content as reflected on standardized tests, MCAS scores, and teacher grades.

For additional information regarding WCS Retention and Promotion policy, reference WCS Student Policy Handbook (p. 47)

CURRICULUM

Children in the three-to-six age range acquire knowledge in ways that are significantly different from the way older children learn. Younger children learn best through direct sensory encounters. The curriculum responds to the differing learning and developmental needs of young children. Each decision about the curriculum was made in light of what is developmentally and individually appropriate and what is best for the particular children being served. The content of the curriculum reflects a balance of all areas of learning offered in an integrated manner and reflects the holistic nature of learning. The following indicators reflect the content of teachers' daily lesson plans and are based both on firsthand, day-to-day experiences and extensive research into how young children learn.

- Life experiences are used as a basis for learning.

- Language acquisition and development are experience based.
- Spoken and written language skills interact and influence each other.
- Children learn about reading and writing through observing these skills being used and through using and interacting with their environment.
- A natural language approach precedes phonics instruction which is introduced in kindergarten. Children develop an awareness of phonics through interaction with meaningful text (i.e. stories, songs, invented spelling, etc.).
- Skills are presented in a meaningful context.
- Independent pre-writing and pre-reading practice are scheduled each day.
- Numbers and numeration are developed through manipulation of concrete objects and are understood by the children before they move to operations.
- Development of logical thinking and problem solving is fostered.
- Many opportunities are made available for children to explore, investigate, and discover mathematics.
- Concepts, dispositions, and the acquisition of skills are addressed in an integrated fashion; content is not presented as isolated bits of knowledge.
- Values are taught through modeling, role-playing, and simulation.
- Content is responsive to the cultures and linguistic diversity of children involved. Representatives of the community come frequently to the school.
- Play is respected as an appropriate way of learning.
- Content is integrated around themes. The theme approach includes activities in language arts, social studies, creative dramatics, music, art, science, math or any combination of these, rather than via short periods of time spent on each subject area.

All teachers use the most recent standards developed by Massachusetts to create their units of study. At this time, teachers in Kindergarten use *Wonders* as a resource for reading instruction, *Fundations* to instruct phonics, and *Go Math* as a resource for mathematics instruction. ST Math, Lexia, and i-Ready programs are also being used for learning practice and assessments.

Homework Policy

Homework has proven to be an effective supplement to instructional activities introduced at school. Assignments may vary according to grade level and need. The best practice is to read at home with your child and practice skills that are shared by the classroom teacher. Please consult with your child's teacher for her/his specific expectations.

Report Cards/ Progress Notes

Macomber School functions on Semesters. In January and June you will receive a Standards-Based Report Card informing you on your child's progress. Progress Reports are sent home as needed mid-way through the marking periods.

Preschool & Pre-K students

Tuition

Students who are enrolled in the Preschool and Pre-K program are required to pay a yearly tuition, payable on a monthly basis, and due on the first day of each month. Tuition is used to support the program to include teaching materials, play equipment, "enrichment" activities, entertainment, and for any additional expenses deemed necessary by the early childhood team members. Tuition is due the first of the month. If tuition is not paid by the 15th of the month, your child is not eligible to return the following month. Families may pay for the entire year in September as well.

Extra Clothes

Each child needs a complete set of extra clothes to be kept in the classroom. Please label everything and put them in a labeled zipper bag.

Snack

Snack will not be provided. Please send in one healthy snack with a drink and a lunch with a drink. Please let us know if your child has any allergies. Classrooms will limit celebrations (i.e. holidays) that involve food. Students may bring in a special treat at times if the teacher has made plans for the celebration but NO OUTSIDE FOOD (from home or store bought) should be brought in to share.

Other Requests

Sometimes your child's teacher will ask for 2 photographs of your child. We laminate, label and mount these photographs in their cubbies and mailboxes.

A backpack labeled with your child's name and large enough for papers and notes is requested. We check backpacks daily for any "mail" from home.

STUDENT SERVICES

ELL

Education is a basic right of all children in the United States. The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) added important new educational rights for English language learners and their parents. Federal laws, such as NCLB, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, and Massachusetts state laws recognize that students who are new to the United States and who are English language learners need extra support. They need help to learn English and, at the same time, to master academic standards.

The Westport Community Schools is committed to ensuring that all educational programs meet the diverse needs of all students. Students who are English Language Learners (ELLs) in grades K-12 are provided with a comprehensive ELL Program that is staffed by highly qualified ELL teachers. These teachers focus on meeting the needs of all students in the program in two areas: becoming proficient in the English language and adjusting to the school and community culture.

State and federal laws use the terms “students with limited English proficiency” (or, LEP students), “English language learners” (or, ELLs), and “English learners” to describe the same group of students.

The Westport Community School’s English Language Learner (ELL) program assists students whose first language at home is not English. Students are supported in language development, particularly in listening and reading comprehension, and language production - speaking and writing.

Special Education

The Eligibility Guidelines for Special Education were developed by the MA Dept. of Ed. at the direction of the Legislature as a result of the January 1992 amendment to chapter 71B (the State Law for Special Education). These included the establishment of an effective pre-referral process; increasing the capacity of regular classroom teachers to make modifications to curricula and instructional strategies and to measure the effectiveness of those interventions. All assessments are an ongoing process of gathering information about the student and the learning environment. It is a problem solving process aimed at generating the kinds of information necessary for effective decision-making and learning.

Section 504 Accommodation Plan

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is designed to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, organization, or activity receiving federal financial assistance, such as a public school district. Section 504 does require school districts to reasonably accommodate students with disabilities so that they may receive the benefits of the school district’s educational programs. Reasonable accommodations do not require major or substantial modification in the school district’s program. A Section 504 Plan is a written plan that outlines accommodations that are necessary in order for a person with a handicap to be able to access general education services.

Instructional Support Team (IST)

IST is a school-based, problem-solving group whose purpose is to assist with strategies for working with students who have difficulties in learning and/or behavior. Based upon the discussions of the IST, students may be provided with a tiered system of support or “Response to Intervention” (RTI). The committee includes the Principal or designee, the student’s grade level team, the grade level

special education teacher, and may include one or more of the following: reading specialist, nurse, school adjustment counselor, school psychologist, behavior specialist, occupational therapist or speech pathologist. The primary role of the committee is to help students with learning and/or behavior problems receive assistance they need within the regular education setting. An intervention plan is developed and put into place for a specified period of time and monitored throughout that period. A follow up meeting is scheduled to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan. If necessary, a second plan can be formulated.

Counseling

Macomber School employs a full time certified School Adjustment Counselor. The counselor may provide student support and consultation to teachers, administrators and parents regarding academic and/or behavioral issues, and he/she may conduct classroom and/or small group lessons. He/She also coordinates special education services for preschool and kindergarten, and facilitates the Early Intervention Transition Process.

Kindergarten Screening

All children entering kindergarten are screened using a standardized screening instrument in the fall. The screening is conducted by one of the early childhood team members assigned to the school. Students found to be “at risk” as a result of the outcomes may be referred to the Macomber SST team for further evaluation. Preschool-age children are screened on an individualized basis on recommendations of the early childhood team and/or parents’ request.

Transition Planning

Preschool children who are suspected of having a disability and are being transitioned into the public school system may be referred six months prior to their third birthday. Young children may be referred as a result of their participation in an early intervention program, pediatrician’s recommendation or parental request. For students being transitioned into kindergarten, transition planning begins in early spring. Children identified with special needs are eligible for special needs services,

free of charge, at age 3. Parents are included in the transition process and the development of an Individual Education Plan should the child be eligible for special needs services. Children enrolled in preschool or kindergarten may be referred for a special needs evaluation at any time with the consent of a parent/guardian should any developmental concerns arise that are affecting the child's ability to access the curriculum.

For students transitioning from another school system, parents and/or guardians should have an official transfer slip, signed release of information form from their previous school's administration office and copies of school records. All transfer students must have a signed transfer slip from the administration of the previous school. Parents or guardians should also have a signed release of information form and copies of any special needs service plans if applicable.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

State and federal laws as well as School Committee policy guarantee that no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of a public school on account of actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex/gender, marital status, homelessness, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, family care leave status, pregnancy or any condition related to pregnancy, or military/veteran status.

This law makes it clear that all aspects of public school education must be fully open and available to all students, without discrimination. We may not exclude students from any course, activity, service or resource available on account of actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex/gender, marital status, homelessness, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, family care leave status, pregnancy or any condition related to pregnancy, or military/veteran status."

The Equal Educational Opportunity Regulations, adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Education in 1975, address five areas of school policy: school admissions,

admission to courses of study, guidance services, course content, and extra-curricular and athletic activities.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this law and how it affects your children, please contact your school principal, or the Superintendent of Schools, at 508 636-1140 x 4001, or the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Copies of the law and the regulations can be obtained from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5023, 617 388-3300x285 or x242, and are also available on the Internet at <http://info.doe.mass.edu>.

The Title IX Coordinator and the Civil Rights Coordinator, is the Director of Special Education. Direct any complaints regarding any found discrimination to the Superintendent of Schools, Westport Community Schools, 17 Main Road, Westport, MA 02790 or phone 508-636-1140.

REMOTE LEARNING

In the event of a district-specific emergency requiring the use of remote learning, the superintendent of schools may declare such an emergency and shall, as soon as possible, obtain the approval of the school committee. The remote learning plan below will be applicable in cases of disease, weather emergencies, destruction or damage to schools rendering them inaccessible, or other extraordinary circumstances, including emergencies declared by government officials, the school committee, or the superintendent.

When it becomes necessary for the school district to provide support to students who are unable to attend classes or access appropriate services due to an extended closure, the superintendent shall establish a plan and procedures to ensure that such services are provided. The provision of educational services may include the use of technology and devices, and strategies designed to support student learning away from school.

The remote learning plan will, to the extent possible:

- Ensure the safety of all students and faculty in coordination with appropriate local and state departments and agencies;

- Provide support for student social and emotional wellbeing and address the implications of trauma experienced by students or faculty as a result of the emergency;
- Identify goals and strategies for maintaining standards of student achievement and school improvement plans;
- Ensure instruction and services are delivered by district educators and personnel as much as practicable;
- Utilize the most effective tools and resources available for students and faculty, including the skills and talents of district personnel, in the delivery of instruction and services and share resources as needed;
- Provide resources and services equitably to meet the needs and circumstances of all students;
- Identify remedial strategies necessary after the emergency to advance student achievement (i.e. after-school, extended day, summer school, and contingency scheduling to cancel vacations.)
- Gather information both during and after the period of emergency regarding the most effective means of remote learning to implement as appropriate.

In developing a remote learning plan, the superintendent will:

- Identify and prepare effective means for communicating with faculty, students, parents and community stakeholders.
- Collaborate with municipal agencies that support the schools and community.
- Consult with the school committee to identify any extraordinary actions necessary or authority required to administer emergency and remote learning plans. This includes any changes to district policies on the school calendar, grading, promotions and retentions, local graduation requirements, testing, and standards and accountability
- Consult with administrators and principals to ensure the continuing education of students at all levels, including:
 - use of the most appropriate resources, tools and strategies to deliver the curricula given local circumstances and conditions;
 - equitable access to appropriate content for all students;
 - specific accommodations for students at high risk, including clients of special education, students with disabilities, English learners, students at economic disadvantage, homeless students, students in foster care and students of military families.

- Utilize available technological resources suitable for serving students at all levels. This inventory will be prepared in advance in anticipation of an emergency.
- Ensure the privacy rights of students, faculty and families are protected, including assessing the security of district technology.
- Consult with bargaining units to determine if modifications to collective bargaining agreements need to be established for the period of the emergency.
- Identify the financial implications of the emergency plan and recommend transfer of funds as may be necessary.

LEGAL REFS.: 20 U.S.C. §1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
 15 U.S.C. §§ 6501–6506 Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)

CROSS REFS.: EBCD – Emergency Closings
 IGA – Curriculum Development
 IGB – Support Services Programs
 IHBEA – English Learner Education
 IJND – Access to Digital Resources
 IJNDB – Empowered Digital Use
 IJNDC – Internet Publication
 IJNDD – Policy on Social Media
 IHBEA – English Language Learners
 JB – Equal Educational Opportunities
 JBB – Educational Equity

SOURCE: MASC – May 2020

File: JICJ

HOME/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Communication

Visit the district website to keep up to date on events and school happenings at www.westportschools.org.

Many classroom teachers use computer apps to keep in communication with families.

Visit the district's Facebook account <https://www.facebook.com/westportcommunityschools/> or Twitter account @SchoolsWestport to learn more about school events and exciting news!

Westport Community Schools also utilizes **ONE CALL NOW** to notify parents of school closings, emergencies, etc.. Parents may receive notification via phone, email and texts.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences will be held mid year. You are always welcome to request a conference with your child's teacher as needed throughout the year.

Family Involvement

You are partners in your child's learning. Our school has many opportunities for you to participate actively.

The WES/MAC PTO (parent-teacher support organization) of both the Westport Elementary School and the Alice A. Macomber School meets regularly once a month. We are fortunate to have the strong support and participation of our PTO through teacher grants, sponsorship of enrichment activities, volunteerism, support for major improvements, field trips, and fundraising.

You will receive an invitation to indicate your area of interest, followed by an organizational meeting. All organization meetings will be posted. You will receive membership information directly from WES/MAC PTO and frequent updates on WES/MAC PTO activities. Information is mailed home, posted on the bulletin board at school or sent home with students.

There are many opportunities for parent participation through volunteerism at the Macomber School:

- Active participation of the WES/MAC PTO Board
- Attending monthly WES/MAC meetings
- Assisting in the classroom
- Serving as a visiting reader
- Serving as a computer volunteer
- Participating on the School Council

All volunteers: Volunteers must complete a CORI check form and read and sign-off on the *Volunteer Guidebook* available in the school office. Volunteers are encouraged to wait until October before volunteering.

FIELD TRIPS

Educational field trips are taken in conjunction with the curriculum at the various grade levels. These trips are designed to supplement different aspects of the classroom curriculum and to introduce students to the resources of the community.

Parents will receive notices of field trips well in advance of the scheduled trip date and will always be asked to sign the field trip permission forms. Parents **MUST** sign and return permission slips in a timely fashion in order for their child to participate. Failure to do so may exclude a child from attending. Please be cognizant of the time the field trip is scheduled for departure.

Fingerprinting

All volunteers who will be attending any school related field trip outside of the school building must have fingerprints on file with the Central Administration Office. Please call the school office for more information on fingerprinting.

USE OF FACILITIES

The Alice A. Macomber School is available for a variety of uses. All inquiries should be made through the Macomber School office well in advance of the date on which you wish to schedule your activity. There is a facility fee for activities. For more information, please call the school office at 508-678-8671.

Thank you for your cooperation with the matters listed in this handbook. We look forward to partnering with you to make your child's school experience a positive one.